District Math Program

The Board of Education has established, "improving mathematics instruction," as an instructional priority of the school district. To accomplish this, we have developed a Mathematics Continuum for the district. The Continuum is now the mathematics curriculum for the district for grades K-8, and consists of 260 objectives grouped under eleven major areas. These are reading, writing, and counting (one area), whole numbers (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division), fractions, measurement, geometry, graphing, verbal problems, algebra, decimals, ratio and proportion, and percent. Each group of objectives is also grouped by level (primary, intermediate, and middle school). The purposes of the Continuum are to:

1. Help teachers individualize instruction.
2. Provide teachers and administrators with a list of those math skills which are important.
3. Provide continuity of program from year to year.
4. Serve as a basis for a record keeping system which enables a teacher, at the beginning of each year, to have an accurate record of the math skills a pupil has mastered the previous year.
5. Report to parents on their child's math ability, skills, and progress.
6. Enable the district to evaluate pupil progress and program, strengths and weaknesses.

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Community Service News

As part of a five week Community Service mini-course, ten of Mrs. Wikstrom's eighth grade students taught French for enrichment at the Miller Avenue School. The class they worked with was the third grade-fourth grade interage class which is taught by Mrs. DeNiff and Mrs. Victor. Students used puppets, pictures, games and records to teach numbers, parts of the body and a French song. The student teachers were: Patricia Bindrum, Leslie Doroski, Janet Gill, Georgeann Grego, Thomas Levis, Janet Mulcahy, Christopher Smalley, Fred Tallman, Michael Wern, and Kathy Zylan.

Faculty-Pupil Honors

Ron Meixsell, the Middle School's Chorus Director, was the guest conductor of the All-Country Sixth Grade Chorus at the Marion Junior-Senior High School, Marion, New York. The Chorus was made up of 170 selected sixth graders from all the schools in Wayne County. Activities included rehearsals on Friday, March 5th, and Saturday, March 6th, with a concert on Saturday afternoon.

The Wading River Library Media Center has just been notified by the Bureau of School Libraries in Albany that it is the recipient of an ESEA Title II Federal Grant in the amount of $17,290. The grant, written by media specialist, Dawn Goldstine, will be used to purchase print and non-print materials and certain pieces of equipment which will support the primary goal of motivating reading through the children's participation in a variety of projects.

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Children Teach Children Program

It was reported in the last issue of the newsletter that the children teach children program inaugurated by the Briarcliff School has continued and is flourishing. The most recent program involves sixth graders in Mr. Heilbrun’s advisory. These children work with kindergarteners on assorted readiness activities. Included in these activities are alphabet games, use of the workbench, and other enjoyable readiness activities. This project is coordinated by Mr. Rachlin.

Middle schoolers have also become involved in the morning program at the Briarcliff School. Middle School students have been coming to the morning programs on a regular schedule to perform for the youngsters at Briarcliff. Recently David Foley and Russell Deitz brought a synthesizer and with the help of Todd Kelley, the music teacher, children sang songs that were recorded. David and Russell then added sounds using the synthesizer to create an eerie musical composition. David and Russell returned on another day to give the children at Briarcliff an explanation of the synthesizer and how it works. Future Middle School talents to be showcased at Briarcliff will be magicians, dancers, and a percussion ensemble.

Trip To Bide-A-Wee Animal Shelter

Children in Mrs. Winans’ and Mrs. Remek’s class visited the Bide A Wee Animal Shelter. This shelter is publicly funded through contributions. Children were given the opportunity to touch and handle the sheltered animals. In addition, animal care was discussed. At the conclusion of the trip each child was given literature on pets and their care as well as commemorative buttons.

Physical Ed At Briarcliff — Movement While Learning

Movement is one modality in an environment of many sensory and social experiences which facilitates learning for the elementary school child.

The K-2 physical education program has three major areas of emphasis; movement education, perceptual-motor development, and a multidisciplinary approach to learning.

The major goal of movement education is efficient movement for all of life’s activities. Movement education’s emphasis is “conceptual”; its’ method is exploratory and “problem solving”; and its’ content has four major categories:

BODY (or what the body can do)
SPACE (or where the body can move)
EFFORT (or how the body can move)
RELATIONSHIPS (or with whom or what objects the body can move)

The general aspects of physical education, games, sport, dance and gymnastics remain basically the same. The differences are in what is occurring within. For example, the problem of handling a ball, and using different body parts (relationship-body).

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Math Program (continued)

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7. Provide the basis for the development of diagnostic instruments to better ascertain pupils' strengths and weaknesses.

8. Enable the district to plan inservice programs based on evidence of teacher need both as reflected in program evaluation and by teachers evaluating their own strengths and weaknesses.

At present, classroom teachers have a separate Continuum for each student. It is in a manila folder with the child's name on it. As a pupil masters an objective the teacher indicates this by writing the date next to the statement of the objective. The child's folder will be given on to the following year's teacher. It will also be used to report to parents on the child's progress.

A series of test questions has been selected for each objective and those questions have been given to teachers to be used to test for mastery of skills. The objectives and test questions have been numbered in five digit sequential order so they can be programed into the district's computer.

The Continuum was a focus of attention on the Curriculum Conference Day in January. Elementary teachers have been asked to use the Continuum with all pupils and to use it with at least some of their parents so the teachers will be able to report on any problems they encounter in using it in reporting pupil progress.

We will have several workshop sessions this spring to incorporate suggestions made by teachers. We will add objectives and test questions which correspond to the New York State Pupil Evaluation Program (PEP Test). During the summer a workshop is planned to develop resource files of instructional materials teachers can use to teach the objectives.

High School Program —

Our High School Program consists of a number of courses approved by the New York State Education Department. This year, these consist of: Pre-Algebra, Algebra, Geometry (Math 10), Math 11, Pre-Calculus, Calculus, Computer Science I, Business Math, Accounting I, and Accounting II. Next year Computer Science II, Elementary Fractions, Statistics and Math for Life will also be course offerings.

Achievement —

On most measures of pupil achievement in mathematics (these measures consist largely of standardized achievement tests) Shoreham-Wading River pupils score better than pupils of the same age in Suffolk County, New York State, and the nation as a whole. For example, in tests given as part of the New York State Pupil Evaluation Program (PEP) last fall, we recently received the following information:

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Physical Ed At Briarcliff —

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A group of first graders may be asked to find out different things they can do with the objects. The experience serves as a starting point from which a child and his movement potential will grow. After observing carefully what the children do it can best be decided how to help each achieve more. The experiences are individualized so that each child can work at his own rate. This is accomplished by structuring each experience so that it allows for natural differences between children, and provides opportunities for children to make decisions regarding their own learning. The concept of progression is inherent within all ideas and the child is helped to understand himself in relation to his movement potential.

Perceptual-motor development has grown out of concern for the child with learning disabilities. Studies have shown that the slow learner is usually a poor motor performer, hence motor tests are a useful screening device. Children with poor eye-hand coordination or who have not established a sense of left and right, or of where they are in space may have difficulty learning to read and write. Reading and writing demand the integration of visual and motor stimuli. Thought is associated with sensory input, and controlled movement depends on sensory input. Perceptual-achievement have a definite relationship.

The perceptual-motor program here is focused on space orientation, visual perception, auditory perception, kinesthetic awareness and motor skill development.

A multidisciplinary (art, music, physical education, science) approach to teaching such concepts as balance, force, direction, form and shape, help the child gain cognitive understanding through a variety of subject matter.

Classroom teachers are using various active games to enhance various academic skills. This is one way that will improve the abilities of all types of children; too active, clumsy, poorly coordinated, too passive, as well as the normal child. Movement oriented reading, spelling, memory, math, and writing games offer highly motivating exercises that tend to benefit many active children more than does additional exposure to reading drills in a passive content.

Teen Recreation Program

The Shoreham-Wading River Teen Recreation Program is sponsoring an Easter Egg Hunt for the school district's elementary school-aged children on Saturday, April 17 at the Middle School grounds beginning at 1:00 P.M. Separate hunts will be conducted for the school groups K-1, 2-3, and 4-5. A special hunt will be held for pre-schoolers.